

Van Wagoner & Wardell Barn

The large red barn at 112 South Center Street in Midway holds many memories for the Vern & Lillie Wardell family. The Wardell family moved to Midway in 1952 after the Rockport Reservoir forced them to move. Vern & Lillie were looking for a small farm to raise their family and enjoy the benefits of a small farming community again. The barn was already on the property when they moved in. Which was a great influence for Vern in buying the home. Tracy Bronson built the home in the early 1900's. Other property owners were Emery Buhler, George Pierson, and Burt Sorensen.

This barn originally set back in the lot at about 15 West Main St in Midway, and belonged to the William L & Charlotte Sharp Van Wagoner family, whose 2-story home still stands on the corner at #5 West Main Street. It was said to have been built soon after the turn of the century by William L Van Wagoner with help of neighbors and friends.

The barn served well, as a shelter for milk cows, neighborhood gathering place for his own and neighbor children, playing games of 'Cops and Robbers,' 'Cowboys and Indians,' etc.

It is not known when it was moved carefully down the street to its present location, but it was done with pride.

Mr Van Wagoner had formal training in the business field, which bolstered his ventures throughout his life. He soon stood out as a leader, business man, brick-maker, lime-burner, butcher, teacher, orator, school board member, and representative to the Utah State Legislature. He and Charlotte raised a fine family, who also have honored their names.

After Vern & Lillie moved to Midway, Vern always had sheep, cows, etc in the barnyard and across the street in a pasture. The milking stalls were used, as well as the large north side to store hay. Through the years this old red barn has seen many calfs, lambs and kittens born. Squeals of children, grandchildren, & friends have enjoyed swinging on ropes and playing their games.

Vern loved his big red barn and maintained it well. He was 70 yrs old when he last painted it and put on a new tin roof. Although homes surround the old red barn in downtown Midway, it now houses only a few pigeons, and yard implements.

(Note: Informants: Ammon Van Wagoner, Lillie Wardell, & Susan Wardell Warnick. Susan is responsible for the research)

Pict. Courtesy Betty Duke North 2-16-98

